

**BOARD OF EDUCATION
LEVITTOWN UNION FREE SCHOOL DISTRICT
LEVITTOWN, NY**

DATE: August 22, 2012

SPECIAL MEETING

MINUTES

THE SPECIAL MEETING OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION, was duly called and held on Wednesday, August 22, 2012 in the Board Meeting Room of the Levittown Memorial Education Center.

CERTIFICATION:

The District Clerk certified that pursuant to Section 104, Open Meetings Law, notice of meeting was sent to the local newspapers, the Public Library and posted on the district's website. Further, all members of the Board of Education had due notice of said meeting.

PRESENT:

BOARD MEMBERS

Ms. Peggy Marengi
Mr. James Moran
Mr. Michael Pappas – President
Mr. Peter Porrazzo – Vice President
Mr. Edward Powers
Mr. Kevin Regan – Secretary
Mr. Frank Ward

ADMINISTRATION

Dr. James Grossane – Superintendent of Schools
Ms. Debbie Rifkin – Assistant Superintendent

I. CALL TO ORDER

- A.** Pledge of Allegiance
- B.** Mr. Pappas, President, called the Special Meeting to order at 6:30 PM. On a motion by Mr. Porrazzo, seconded by Mr. Powers approved (7-0) that the Board adjourn to Executive Session to meet with legal counsel.
- C.** The Board reconvened in Public Session at 7:35 PM at which time Mr. Pappas asked everyone to stand for the Pledge of Allegiance and a moment of silence for our troops fighting overseas.

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II. PUBLIC BE HEARD
(attached)

III. ACTION ITEMS: NEW BUSINESS.

1. **MOTION:** Mr. Powers moved, "WHEREAS, the Commissioner's, Regulation Section 200, subchapter P, requires each local Board of Education to annually appoint surrogate parents who will represent the interests of a student with a disability whose parents are either unknown or unable to provide such representation at Committee on Special Education (CSE) meetings and/or hearings; and

RESOLUTION #12-13-57
Appointment of
Surrogate Parent

WHEREAS, the Levittown CSE has carefully canvassed those person who have demonstrated a willingness to serve in such capacity,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that Cecilia Forster of 3681 Locust Avenue, Seaford, New York, be appointed as surrogate parent for the 2012-2013 school year."

Seconded: Mr. Regan

MOTION CARRIED. Seven members voting yes.

APPROVED 7 -0.

2. **MOTION:** Mr. Moran moved, "RESOLVED, that the Levittown Board of Education appoint the fifteen parent members on the attached list dated July 27, 2011, all chairpersons, psychologists and special and regular education teachers of special education students as well as Keith Squillacioti, Susan Farkas, Dawn Butler, Barbara Wasserman, Richard Cirillo, Margaret Ippolito and Marty Nelson to serve on the District Committee on Special Education and the Committee on Preschool Special Education for the 2012-2013 school year."

RESOLUTION # 12-13-58
Appointment of Committee
on Special Education and
Committee on Preschool
Special Education

Seconded: Ms. Marenghi

NOTE: Mr. Powers commented that corrections were needed on the attached list. Dr. Grossane noted he would look into it.

MOTION CARRIED. Seven members voting yes.

APPROVED 7-0.

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III. ACTION ITEMS: NEW BUSINESS (continued.)

3. **MOTION:** Mr. Porrazzo moved, "RESOLVED, that pursuant to Article 156.5 of the New York State Education Law, the Levittown Board of Education does, hereby, approve the following 2012-2013 School Year Extensions of Contract for Pupil Transportation, and that the President of the Board of Education is, hereby, authorized to execute the attached contracts and insurance agreements:

RESOLUTION #12-13-59
2012-2013 School Year
Transportation Contract
Extensions

<u>Contractor's Name</u>	<u>Date of Contract</u>	<u>Cost</u>	
Acme/Baumann	April 20, 1999	\$ 7,367.00	36,910.00
Acme/Baumann	August 19, 1999	\$ 0.00	
Acme/Baumann	June 2, 2000	\$ 91,764.00	
We Transport	May 22, 2003	\$ 0.00	
Suburban Bus	May 25, 2005	\$ 59,190.00	
Acme/Baumann	May 30, 2006	\$ 510,870.00	515,183.00
Anytime Bus	May 30, 2006	\$ 0.00	
We Transport	May 30, 2006	\$ 0.00	
Suburban Bus	May 30, 2006	\$ 0.00	
Acme/Baumann	May 31, 2007	\$ 0.00	
Suburban Bus	May 31, 2007	\$ 0.00	
We Transport	May 31, 2007	\$ 5,567.00	
Anytime Bus	May 31, 2007	\$ 0.00	
Acme/Baumann	May 6, 2010	\$ 33,301.00	
Anytime Bus	May 6, 2010	\$ 0.00	
Educational	May 6, 2010	\$ 0.00	
First Student	May 6, 2010	\$ 0.00	
Suburban Bus	May 6, 2010	\$ 20,469.00	
We Transport	May 6, 2010	\$ 0.00	
Acme/Baumann	June 23, 2010	\$ 0.00	
Educational	June 23, 2010	\$ 0.00	
First Student	June 23, 2010	\$ 0.00	
Acme/Baumann	August 25, 2010	\$ 0.00	
Educational	August 25, 2010	\$ 0.00	
We Transport	August 25, 2010	\$ 0.00	
Acme/Baumann	May 6, 2011	\$ 13,574.00	
Anytime bus	May 6, 2011	\$ 0.00	
Educational	May 6, 2011	\$ 0.00	
First Student	May 6, 2011	\$ 0.00	
Suburban Bus	May 6, 2011	\$ 0.00	
We Transport	May 6, 2011	\$ 0.00	
Acme/Baumann	August 18, 2011	\$ 0.00	
First Student	August 18, 2011	\$ 0.00	
We Transport	August 18, 2011	\$ 0.00."	

Seconded: Mr. Ward

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III. ACTION ITEMS: NEW BUSINESS (continued.)

NOTE: Mr. Moran inquired about why the dates on the contracts were from 1999- 2011. Since Mr. Flower was not in attendance, Mr. Howard, Assistant Business Manager, responded. He stated that these contracts are for renewal and those are the original contract dates.

Mr. Pappas reported on changes to the cost of two vendors on the list.

AMEND AS FOLLOWS: Change the first vendor on the list – Acme/Baumann, April 20, 1999 from \$7,367 to \$36,910. Change the sixth vendor - Acme/Baumann, May 20, 2006 from \$510,870 to \$515,183.

MOTION CARRIED. Seven members voting yes.

APPROVED AS AMENDED 7-0.

4. **MOTION:** Mr. Moran moved, "RESOLVED, that pursuant to Article 156.5 of the New York State Education Law, the Levittown Board of Education does, hereby, approve the following 2012-2013 School Year Contract for Pupil Transportation, and that the President of the Board of Education is, hereby, authorized to execute the attached contracts and insurance agreements:

RESOLUTION #12-13-60
2012-2013 School Year
Transportation Contract

<u>Contractor's Name</u>	<u>Date of Contract</u>		<u>Cost</u>
Acme/Baumann	May 8, 2012	\$	7,650.00
Anytime Bus	May 8, 2012	\$	0.00
Educational	May 8, 2012	\$	0.00
First Student	May 8, 2012	\$	0.00
Suburban Bus	May 8, 2012	\$	0.00
We Transport	May 8, 2012	\$	0.00."

Seconded: Mr. Porrazzo

MOTION CARRIED. Seven members voting yes.

APPROVED 7-0.

5. **MOTION:** Mr. Regan moved, "RESOLVED, that the Levittown Board of Education does, hereby, approve the renewal of the following bid with Cookies & More:

RESOLUTION # 12-13-61
Bid Renewal

10E No. 20 – Snack Food for After School Program.....not to
Exceed \$40,000.00."

Seconded: Mr. Porrazzo

NOTE: Mr. Porrazzo questioned when was the last time the bid went out. He was told it was 2010 and would be rebid next year.

MOTION CARRIED. Seven members voting yes.

APPROVED 7-0.

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III. ACTION ITEMS: NEW BUSINESS (continued.)

6. **MOTION:** Mr. Ward moved, "RESOLVED, that the Levittown Board of Education does, hereby, approve and award the following bid MyHealthyThing:

RESOLUTION # 12-13-62
Approval of Bid

12E No.16 – Vending Machinesper proposed commission rate."

Seconded: Mr. Powers

NOTE: Mr. Powers asked Mr. Ward if he was present for the bid openings. Mr. Ward responded that he was there with approximately six students who stayed all day and did a great job.

Mr. Porrazzo inquired about the process for reviewing the bids. Mr. Ward reported that the committee met with the vendors who gave a presentation and brought vending machine products. The committee tasted the foods, took notes and rated the presentation and foods independently. At the end of the long process, there was a discussion where everything was ranked from best to worst and a company was selected.

Mr. Pappas remarked he came late to the presentation but felt it was run very professionally with the volunteers doing amazing work. He mentioned that Mr. Flower was chairman of the committee. He reported that the panel of students used this time were different. Mr. Pappas asked for a consensus from the Board to recognize all the students and adults who attended the presentation, at the next Board meeting. The Board responded affirmatively.

MOTION CARRIED. Seven members voting yes.

APPROVED 7-0.

7. **MOTION:** Mr. Porrazzo moved, "RESOLVED, that the Levittown Board of Education does, hereby, enter into the attached agreement with Kaplan, Inc., for a complete SAT Classroom Prep course for the October 6, 2012 SAT for a total of \$5,590 per class."

RESOLUTION # 12-13-63
Agreement with Kaplan,
Kaplan, Inc.

Seconded: Mr. Ward

NOTE: Mr. Pappas noted that on August 8th the Board had voted to move forward with the Kaplan program. He reported that it has been brought to the attention of all Board members that some information they received has been incorrect. Dr. Grossane explained that he had obtained information on how to pay for the course for instance, if we were able to subsidize it or what rate we could charge. He received this information from the auditors and State Education Department. He noted there was a lot of discussion from the Board on this topic. Since then, he has been working with Mr. Cohen, to reach back to the representative of the State Education Department. Additionally, he spoke with the District Superintendent for Nassau BOCES regarding the program. Dr. Grossane remarked that this new information conflicts with the previous information. He stated we can offer the Kaplan course at a reduced rate, however, the original intention was to offer it in lieu of the current programming. If we did this, there would be a question of equity and cost of funding, where we might be liable for the entire cost of the course. This is because in the past it has been offered as curriculum and a teaching period for a class teacher, one fifth of their salary. Dr. Grossane noted this

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III. ACTION ITEMS: NEW BUSINESS (continued.)

information is not what we had anticipated and is different than how we were advised previously. He stated several Board members wish to reduce the amount of tuition we are charging for the Kaplan program. Dr. Grossane discussed several options for the Board to consider regarding which programs to run and what tuition to charge. He advised waiting for legal advice from our attorneys for clarity. He recommended running the Kaplan course since over 64 students signed up for the existing class and were appreciative of our offering the course. He noted that if we accepted the agreement, ratified the contract and ran it as a service, we would be within our legal rights. If the Board wanted to investigate how to use the course in a different manner it would require more time and the development of a policy on how to deliver SAT preparation to all students according to advice he received. Some Board members were concerned about changing the tuition rate after having the first class.

Mr. Pappas pointed out that the underlining problem is that the information the Board was given at the last meeting was inaccurate and the Board was asked to vote on incorrect information. He stated the foundation of the Board of Education's decisions are based on information they assume is accurate. Mr. Pappas stated that according to the attorneys, in absence of clear legal guidelines the Board has great discretion. The Board could keep things as they are, set a lower per pupil fee, or offer Kaplan for no fee, in lieu of the after school program. Additionally, the Board President could call for a motion to rescind the vote on the August 8th Agenda item for the Kaplan program since the information was erroneous. The Board discussed what course of action to take considering this issue. Mr. Pappas stated he did not want to take the course away but was questioning the cost and the other courses that he felt were ineffective.

Mr. Regan commented that the information he was receiving still needed to be clarified. In the meantime, he felt it was unfair to those registered to not offer the course. He wanted the Board to move forward and consent to this agreement.

Mr. Porrizzo wanted to wait for the determination of Administration regarding whether the existing prep classes are effective, if they are not, than see if we can eliminate them under the teachers' contract and spend the money on the Kaplan program. Mr. Porrizzo had requested data on student's test score prior to and after the prep classes. Dr. Grossane reported that the Guidance Department is needed to go through all the records for this information. He said that he will have it as soon as possible.

Ms. Marengi noted that the way the resolution is written, is to approve running a Kaplan program on October 6th for \$5590. She suggested that the Board vote on this motion and have discussions at a later date regarding the issues that are being raised. Mr. Porrizzo agreed and stated that it is our obligation to proceed with this program as we have already informed the community that we are running it. He commented that he is willing to revisit the issue once we have all the facts and our questions answered.

Mr. Ward asked if the students who are retaking the SAT have taken any of our courses. Dr. Grossane noted that he did not know but that most students who take the October SAT are seniors who are trying to better their scores one last time. Mr. Ward questioned how our teachers teaching the SAT prep course were different than the Kaplan instructors. Dr. Grossane reported that Kaplan has agreed to come in to train our teaching staff, free of charge, in some of the Kaplan methods for the other courses that are given, so that we can give a better product to our students. He stated that we are trying to give as best a program as we can, in as quick a time as we can, than

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III. ACTION ITEMS: NEW BUSINESS (continued.)

do more research and have something much more appropriate in full support of the Board for the Spring. Dr. Grossane stated that we need to proceed cautiously and do the right thing.

Mr. Powers went over the timeline of the legal advice received from our legal counsel. He noted that the original advice our attorneys gave us is completely different from the latest advice. This is due to the way the contract is written, which Mr. Cohen did not have time to review before he made his legal opinion and the August 8th vote was taken. It seems the information we based our vote on was not correct. He stated that the guidance we are getting now has much ambiguity. Mr. Powers stated while the resolution should be approved, he was abstaining because he felt he did not have ample time to process the information that's needed for this decision.

**MOTION CARRIED. Six members voting yes
One member abstaining. (Mr. Powers)**

APPROVED 6-0-1.

8. RECOMMENDED MOTION: "RESOLVED, that the Levittown Board of Education does, hereby, approve the attached Memorandum of Agreement between the District and the Levittown United Teachers (LUT), as per the terms of the attached memorandum."

PULLED
Memorandum of Agreement with Levittown United Teachers

9. **MOTION:** Mr. Moran moved, "To approve the following Schedules:

RESOLUTION #12-13-64
Schedules

Schedule 12-G-3 (Resignation/Termination – Certified Personnel)."	1001
Schedule 12-GG-3 (Resignation/Termination – Non-Instructional Personnel)."	1002
Schedule 12-H-4 (Appointments – Certified Personnel)."	1003
Schedule 12-H-4g (Designation - Coaches)."	1004
Schedule 12-H-4a-1 (Salary Change – Certified Personnel)."	1005
Schedule 12-HH-a (Appointments – Non-Instructional)."	1006
Schedule 12-HH-4a-1 (Salary Change – Non-Instructional Personnel)."	1007

PULLED

Seconded: Mr. Regan

AMEND AS FOLLOWS: Schedule 12-HH-4a-1 – **PULLED** for further clarification.

MOTION CARRIED. Seven members voting yes.

APPROVED AS AMENDED 7-0.

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IV. ADJOURN

MOTION: Mr. Porrazzo moved, seconded by Ms. Marengi to adjourn the public meeting at 8:31 PM.

ADJOURNMENT

Respectfully submitted

Elizabeth Appelbaum
District Clerk

NOTE: TAPES OF THE MEETING ARE AVAILABLE FOR REVIEW AT THE LEVITTOWN LIBRARY.

ATTACHMENTS TO BOARD OF EDUCATION MINUTES

OF MEETING OF August 22, 2012

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V. **PUBLIC BE HEARD**

PLEASE NOTE: COPIES OF ATTACHMENTS SUBMITTED ARE GIVEN TO THE BOARD OF EDUCATION AND THEN KEPT WITH THE OFFICIAL MINUTES IN THE DISTRICT CLERK OFFICE.

The guidelines pertaining to Public Be Heard were read. Dr. Grossane and/or Board members will respond to questions, after the last speaker is heard.

Kathleen Vaughn Ware 824 Pineneck Rd., Seaford, NY

Ms. Vaughn Ware was concerned about the ELA test scores for our district. She felt that we are not performing at the level we should be. She thought the district had put measures in place to improve the scores. Ms. Vaughn Ware asked many questions regarding these scores such as: if the reading specialist position was filled; if reading books had been selected yet, since last year the choice for 7th grade was not inspirational; and if the problems with the AIS program have been addressed. Ms. Vaughn Ware stated that we need to improve our curriculum and she wanted to know what if any implementations were planned.

RESPONSE:

In response to Ms. Vaughn Ware's questions:

Ms. Marengi reported that the Board is aware that there is a problem and was not satisfied with the test scores, especially in the middle schools. She remarked that, professionally speaking, the problem is more about methodology rather than materials. The methods of which children are learning and teachers are teaching need to be looked at more clearly. She commented that conversations will move forward regarding curriculum and methodology and what needs to be revamped. She stated that they will be looking with laser like focus at individual classes, individual teachers and what the scores are. She noted that the Board has requested these from Dr. Grossane.

Dr. Grossane replied that none of Administration were pleased with the test scores and everyone knows we can do better. He noted that a report will be discussed later in the meeting. He remarked that he will be working with the Administrative team between now and the start of school discussing how to improve instruction. He mentioned that there will be a lot of programs this year to move things forward such as on-going professional development. Dr. Grossane remarked that by analyzing individual teacher scores and seeing individual teacher results, it will draw focus to what each teacher needs to do to improve their practice.

Mr. Ward mentioned that the Board had discussed hiring a reading specialist. He wanted to know the status of that. Dr. Grossane explained that hiring a director of reading had been discussed, but he was not sure if that is what is needed. He felt that in terms of moving instruction forward, we need to get consultants to work individually with teachers, on their individual practice, so we have someone to put forth best practice structures within the classrooms. Dr. Grossane stressed that we need direct teacher instruction.

Mr. Pappas remarked that in defense of Administration, tests have changed since 2008-2009 where most districts including us, have taken a major hit. He noted that we have seen slow but steady increases the last three years. Mr. Pappas pointed out that this was Dr. Grossane's first year and he therefore had not had a chance to put his ideas in practice. We should see much more of an increase based on the plans put in place, in the next few years.

Mr. Porrazzo commented that it is important to benchmark ourselves from other districts.

Respectfully submitted,

Elizabeth Appelbaum,
District Clerk

